UNTO THE LEAST OF THESE

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LUTHERAN WOMANS LEAGUE
1894

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No. 215

UNTO THE LEAST OF THESE

Committee

MRS. M. L. KROPF
MRS. G. P. LOTTICH
MRS. J. L. FORCH, JR.
MRS. E. J. MOSSER

UNTO THE LEAST OF THESE

By

ESTHER GERBERDING HUNT

A History of
The Children's Receiving Home
in Maywood, Illinois
An Achievement of
The Lutheran Woman's League
of Chicago and Vicinity

Lutheran Woman's League of Chicago and Vicinity
1939

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DEDICATED TO

The members of the
Lutheran Woman's League of Chicago
and Vicinity,
whose faith, devotion,
and untiring efforts
have made possible
The Children's Receiving Home,
Maywood, Illinois.

FOREWORD

This is by no means a history of The Lutheran Woman's League founded in 1893. That remains to be written by a far more gifted pen. This is the story in brief of its united service for the past twenty years, the founding and maintaining of The Children's Receiving Home, Maywood, Illinois.

CHAPTER 1

The World War was over. The cannons' thunder and the war activities had ceased. In our fair land there was peace. The stars, representing 1107 sons in the service, had been removed from the names of the mothers in the Year Book of the Lutheran Woman's League. Once again there was time and quiet to consider the question which had been dormant for so long: "Why cannot we," the women again insisted, "have a mutual interest, something definite to work for, something that will really unite us?"

Some daring souls suggested an Old People's Home, some a Day Nursery, but it remained for a Committee, appointed after hearing a stirring address on the work of the Juvenile Court and the dependent children to be provided for, to conceive the brilliant idea of a Children's Receiving Home.

Into the Juvenile Court—of sorrow and heartache —go hundreds of parents and children every day.

Children are taken from parents, and homes are broken up when parents cannot properly care for their children. The Court has 2,155 children under its care in foster homes; 2,500 in orphanages and other institutions; 100 under temporary care. But when a Lutheran child was to be cared for the big question was where could a temporary home and shelter be found? Fortunately there was one bright spot in this dark picture.

Sister Caroline Williams, representing the Norwegian Lutheran Church, was a Court worker, and a member of the Lutheran Woman's League. Only too often when the Judge assigned Lutheran children to her care she had no where to place them. Without Sister Caroline's experience and assistance, her calm and beautiful personality, and, most of all, her firm faith, there could have been no Children's Receiving Home. It was a great honor in later years to have her heralded over the radio as one of Chicago's outstanding women.

When some of these facts, and many more, had been brought to the attention of The League, a Committee was appointed to formulate some plan for united effort.

SISTER CAROLINE WITH HER CHILDREN

One beautiful autumn day, they met in one of the cheerful homes on the Seminary campus in Maywood, a rather remarkable group of women, all unaware that they were making history. The names are familiar; all outstanding women full of faith and good works.

Mrs. L. Harrisville, *Chairman*
Sister Caroline Williams
Mrs. M. L. Kropf
Mrs. George Sonne
Mrs. A. Ofstedahl
Mrs. William Eckert
Mrs. Elmer F. Krauss
Mrs. W. C. Nelson
Mrs. E. H. Pfafflin

The gracious and charming hostess, Mrs. E. F. Krauss, has since been called to her Heavenly Home, but for almost a score of years her untiring labors for the Home, her inspiring reports on the floor at the quarterly meetings, her friendship and good will, were a source of inspiration and encouragement to carry on the good work.

This Committee met three times and was ready to report at the very important meeting on January 18,

1919. This was held in Unity Church, the retiring President, Mrs. William Eckert, presiding. All other business took second place that day. The speaker, the late Dr. G. H. Gerberding, was entirely ignored for lack of time but was given a few moments in which to voice his warm appreciation of the women's efforts. The election of new officers was secondary. All interest and all thought centered about the report of the above mentioned Committee. In brief, the Committee had recommended that a Home be established for children from the Juvenile Court, and other dependent children, that the Lutheran Woman's League have full control of the Home, and that a fund be started at once for such purposes.

The recommendations were passed enthusiastically, and it was a most dramatic moment when Mrs. M. L. Kropf was appointed to take charge of a drive, then and there, to raise funds, with the result that pledges and cash were received amounting to $1,170.00.

The climax was reached when so many women arose to their feet at the same time, all eager to pledge, that clerks were required to assist in getting their correct names and addresses, so wholehearted and generous was the response.

On motion, Mrs. M. L. Kropf was appointed Chairman of a Board to be appointed later, and with the exception of one year has served as Chairman of the Board of Managers for the past two decades.

Her outstanding personality, her never ceasing interest in the Home, her generous gifts, and, above all, her ability to inspire and enthuse, have, no doubt, been the biggest factor in making the Home what it is today.

Armed with the fund raised at the January meeting, 1919, and with unlimited faith, a Committee consisting of Sister Caroline Williams, and Mrs. A. F. Olgen (now called to Life Eternal), set forth to find a suitable location for this great project. Mrs. Kropf came to their assistance by providing the means of transportation. Her machine was used to traverse the great city of Chicago from its beautiful lake shore to its outlying suburbs.

It was well, indeed, that these couragous women had not the slightest idea of the difficulties to be overcome. In their innocence they fondly imagined that by the next quarterly meeting, to be held in April, a location would have been secured. They

soon discovered that, if a suitable building for a Home were found, the Committee would have to secure the signatures of all property owners to locate there. No one wished a Children's Receiving Home as a neighbor, as indeed who would? The house hunting went on unsuccessfully for three months. It commenced to look as if there would be no report to give at the April meeting of the Lutheran Woman's League. But the women were undaunted. By this time the husbands had become interested. The late Dr. Hunt said to the late Rev. Dr. Long, who deserves a special chapter alone, "What about giving the women permission to use your vacant parish house as a temporary Receiving Home?" The result was that Mrs. Kropf and Sister Caroline Williams were asked to appear before the Board of Trustees of The Wicker Park Church.

It was most surprising to the Chairman of The Board of Managers to confront so many of her own relatives on this Church Board with so strange a request. The men, however, were not willing to give a definite answer. The women left feeling that their errand had been a complete failure. In one

way it was a victory for the unfailing help, sympathy and interest of Dr. S. P. Long had been enlisted.

After the meeting in January the Lord provided the help of another outstanding man, Mr. E. J. Mosser, of keen legal mind. The League had never been chartered, and without a charter the Board would have been unable to either lease or buy property. The legal machinery was at once put in motion, and many were the hours spent in Mr. Mosser's office in conference with the State Agent for the Department of Public Welfare and the Committee.

This Committee was composed of Esther M. Hunt, President of the Lutheran Woman's League, Martha Baker Lottich, Secretary, who has since served tirelessly as a member and Secretary of the Board of Managers, also Historian of The League, and for years the talented Editor of The Children's Home Herald, and Louise Valbracht, Treasurer, who has since been called Home. It is interesting to note that she was the mother-in-law of the present very efficient and tireless president, Mrs. E. F. Valbracht.

During these transactions it became necessary to

revise the old Constitution of The Lutheran Woman's League. An effort was made to change the letter but not the spirit. After many delays, and some doubts and fears, due to the ceaseless efforts of Mr. Mosser, who through the twenty years has given much valuable, legal assistance, the charter was issued on May 20, 1919, signed by Louis L. Emmerson, Secretary of State.

It gives the Lutheran Woman's League of Chicago and Vicinity permission "to establish, maintain and operate, without profit, a home or homes for dependent children," and names as its object "to promote and advance the interest and activities of The Lutheran Church."

Meantime, the search for the Home continued. Dr. Long had joined the force. Mrs. Krauss and Mrs. Eckert had called the attention of the Committee to a beautiful property in Maywood, Illinois, and secured figures on the same. Just at this time, another Committee was scouring the city in search of a building suitable for a hospice for the Inner Mission Society. One eventful day representatives of the two committees joined forces and visited the

above mentioned property in Maywood. When Dr. Long saw it he said "The search is ended; here is the ideal location for the children." Some one ventured to ask "Are we looking for a hospice or a Children's Home?" The children won.

Meanwhile, the April meeting of The Lutheran Woman's League was fast approaching. It had seemed for a while that the Committee would have no report. However, on the very day of the meeting, early in the morning, at seven forty-five, Mrs. M. L. Kropf, Sister Caroline Williams and Mrs. A. F. Olgen, arrived in Maywood. After a breakfast on the campus, accompanied by Dr. Long, they made a thorough investigation of the property.

It consisted of a whole city block, located at 902 S. 8th Avenue, Maywood, Illinois. It was bounded on the north by 9th Street, south by Madison Street; 8th Avenue on the east, and 9th Avenue on the west.

Many valuable and rare trees and shrubs were on the grounds, and the house itself was substantial, well built, home-like and sunny.

There was a large sun room suitable for sleeping quarters for the children, large porches, a basement,

which could be used as a play room, and a good heating plant. There was also an old barn on the property about which, for some time, many dreams of a gymnasium centered or a boy's dormitory, until it was discovered that the wood was in no shape for remodeling.

This property was offered for the astonishing price of ten thousand dollars. The Committee was enthusiastic and hastened in Mrs. Kropf's car again to the already assembled meeting of the Lutheran Woman's League. Their report was adopted with much joy and thankfulness, and, from that time on, all the efforts of the League and its acting committees centered about the purchase of the property.

It was just at this juncture that Dr. S. P. Long offered to lead the campaign for funds. His offer was accepted with much gratitude. Five hundred dollars was paid as security. By July three thousand two hundred dollars had been paid, and Dr. Long's congregation in Wicker Park went security for the remaining six thousand eight hundred.

When asked if he thought the surplus could be raised Dr. Long replied: "I do not think so, I know

it can be done." The mails were flooded with literature and the campaign was on.

Dear Miss Helen:

I know God will make your coming year the happier for your generous gift of fifty dollars received today. Thank you. I also thank your good parents, and God I know will give you the happiest year of your life.

Most sincerely,
S. P. Long

The above is but an example of the personal touch which Dr. Long put into the campaign so that it was not merely a raising of money. It became distinctive and personal. Its success was assured from the start.

At this time also a Daughter's Auxiliary, organized but a year before these events, rallied to the support of the Home. They promised to furnish the dining room complete, furniture, dishes, silver, and assumed the payment of the janitor for seven months.

The Luther League of Chicago furnished the Home with coal for winter, and, until 1931. Meanwhile, all summer long, the ladies of the Wicker Park Ladies' Aid and Guild had been busy preparing

linens for the Home, under the leadership of that good friend of the Home, Miss Marie Hanson. This same Guild pledged themselves to furnish the living room of the Home in honor of Dr. Long.

Meanwhile, the Lutheran Woman's League of Chicago and Vicinity was preparing to celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary on the beautiful grounds of its newly acquired property. It was a great day for Chicago Lutherans in general, for on that date, Saturday, September 27, 1919, the Children's Receiving Home was formally opened. It had been decided by the Board of Managers to use the occasion also as a Bundle Day for the Home.

A unique and attractive folder had been mailed by the thousand; it was headed: "At last the big day is coming. Be sure to come to the party and bring your bundle." This folder was designed by the daughter of Mrs. Florence Walrath of The Cradle.

The program was scheduled for three p.m., but as early as two o'clock people could be seen wending their way to 902 S. 8th Avenue with a bundle or two tucked under their arms.

An interested friend, who could not attend, wrote

the first letter to the children. "My bundle to you will contain a strip of bacon, and I will deliver it to you in time for your first breakfast."

The day was a perfect September day. More than seven hundred interested friends gathered on the beautiful grounds.

The daughter of the first president of the League, Mrs. Isabelle Matson Hoffman, was one of the speakers. The Daughter's Auxiliary furnished wonderful music. So great was the interest and enthusiasm that when the Rev. Dr. Long took charge, with his forceful personality, he received $3,600.00 in pledges.

A hot supper had been prepared under the leadership of Mrs. J. Lindberg (a charter member of The League) and was served to all free of charge. This was an innovation, but the well filled pantry shelves proved its success. There were boxes of soap, cases of evaporated milk, more cases of canned vegetables, sacks of flour, bags of sugar, cereals of all kinds in quantities, cocoa, rice, whole hams, slabs of bacon, over a hundred quarts of home made preserves, in fact, enough of everything to feed the first little ones and feed them well.

On October 20 the first child was admitted to the Home. Sister Caroline Williams reported others waiting. One of the first children admitted showed marks on her little body of having been frozen in a cold house. What a blessing that coal had been provided. A Matron had also been secured, and the work of which the women had dreamed so long was in progress.

Thursday, November 27, at 4:30 o'clock was a real Thanksgiving Day, for at the time the Home was formally dedicated. At this time there were nine children in the Home.

The children's first Christmas party was held Wednesday afternoon, December 24, at two thirty. It was a very simple affair compared to the wonderful Christmas celebrations now held in the beautiful new building. But there were bountiful refreshments, many gifts, Christmas carols, a tree, and the old, but ever new, story of the Christmas Babe, very simply told.

Needless to say, the wires were kept busy during those strenuous days and many, many were the telephone messages flashed back and forth by those in

office. Said the Chairman of The Board of Managers to the President of The League over the wire one evening after the dedication: "I am beginning to feel that this thing is really going to go!" She had just reported the gift of an electric iron, wash machine, and mangle to the Home.

It would be out of the question in these few brief pages to report all the gifts made to the Home. They have all been recorded elsewhere, and all, from the first string of Christmas tree lights to the last will and testament of departed friends, have been duly appreciated though it seemed sometimes that thanks were but poorly expressed.

There is the Ladies' Guild that through the years has given over ten thousand dollars; there is the other man, Mr. Fred Luhnow, who advanced his own money to enable Dr. Long to meet his notes in payment on the property; there is the Ladies' Aid of one church that for twenty years has paid five dollars a month for eggs for the children; there are other organizations and individuals who furnished the first beds and dressers; there is the Girls' Club, which has dressed two of the children for years; the

friend who gave music lessons; the one who cut the children's hair; the friends who celebrated their golden wedding so beautifully by giving the Home one thousand dollars, and the kind friends who still provide each child a sum with which to do Christmas shopping. There is a Cleaning establishment in Oak Park which takes care of the cleaning of the children's clothes. And there is the good Doctor in Maywood who gives his services and asks but a book for a fee.

This could continue unceasingly. All are stepping stones on which the present structure has been reared.

"Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith triumphant over fears,
Are all with thee—Are all with thee."

CHAPTER 2

IT IS MOST INTERESTING to note, in passing, how the homeless child was cared for years ago. Before the Civil War the states all clung to the old English "pauper-law." The homeless child was nobody's child. Orphan asylums were grim and gloomy. Boys as young as seven years old were "bound out" for their board and keep. Girls as young as ten were sent out as household drudges.

It was way back in 1870 that New York, Ohio, and our own Illinois, set up state welfare bureaus to take over the guardianship of the homeless children within their boundaries.

From that time on new principles were advocated. Scientists insisted that the child of misfortune is not fundamentally different from any other child; that his needs are the same and the deepest of these needs is to be wanted and given individual opportunity.

These facts, and many others, had to be learned

by the women closely connected with and working for The Children's Receiving Home. All, with the exception of Sister Caroline, had had no experience, but the work was a liberal education.

Just one year from the date of the purchase of the Home the debt was entirely canceled, owing to the ceaseless efforts of Dr. Long.

The Home had been opened and dedicated, the first children received and the first guests formally entertained beside a roaring fire in the old fashioned fireplace. These happened to be delegates from France to a Brotherhood Convention.

With their newly acquired property and their newly acquired family the women were more and more anxious to press on. The boundary lines of the different groups were broken as never before. From the beginning of time women have been able to rally about that specific object, so dear to their hearts: "the child."

True, there was one very stormy session of The League, when the old dues of fifty cents per annum were forever voted down and voluntary pledges substituted. Also about this time Mrs. O. J. Waters,

DINING ROOM OF THE FIRST HOME

one of the founders of the League, was appointed to secure Life and Associate memberships. The year 1921 ninety new Associate members were enlisted through the efforts of Mr. J. P. Hovland at a U.L.C. Brotherhood Convention. Other memberships, in Memoriam and Sustaining, were added as the years went by and have proved a source of much income for the Home. Aside from the money point of view, they have interested countless friends in the work of the Home.

The second year of the Home in action was not as full of dramatic events as the first, but there was a steady normal progress. Twenty-five children were admitted during the year, and almost at once, showed the effect of good food and good care.

One little fellow when received did not walk correctly owing to malnutrition. In a few weeks this defect was remedied, and he was a normal, healthy child.

At the beginning of the second year the Chairman of the Board of Managers reported: "No debts, house in excellent condition, treasury in shape to meet all present bills."

But the women were not content to rest on their laurels. Almost at once it became apparent that more room was necessary. Many children were refused because of lack of room. Also, an outbreak of whooping cough made it apparent that an isolation ward was needed.

The women commenced to talk "building." Plans for a drive were formulated, but for a year or two, at least, these enthusiastic workers had to be content with the remodeling of the old barn into a laundry. This was a much needed improvement. Other repairs soon followed. Outside steps and porches were repaired, new grates in the furnace installed, ceiling and walls calcimined, a new cupboard installed, and the whole building rewired.

Most important of all, the children entering the Home learned high standards of living. They were shown the difference between right and wrong, and after being in the Home a very short time a marked change for the better was apparent.

Meantime, the Lutheran Woman's League had elected a new President, Mrs. Peter Peterson, capable and efficient, thus binding the different groups still

more closely together. The two years that followed were rather eventful. The first two children were confirmed in St. John's Church, Maywood, Illinois. This church has proved itself a real church home for the children from the very beginning. The children have attended Sunday School, confirmation classes, and church services. They have been shown every kindness and consideration.

It was just about this time that a Kindergarten was suggested for the children, but it remained for the Daughter's Auxiliary, ever helpful, to make this a reality some years later.

The first little one at the Home to pass away was Philip Nathaniel on June 8 of that year. He had never been a well baby, having a weak heart, but to have been given a good home and made comfortable shows again the work of the Home. The Pastor of St. John's Church had christened the baby and conducted the burial service. At this time The Children's Receiving Home was admitted into membership into The Children's Benefit League of Chicago, which entitled the Home to the privileges of Tag Day.

The Children's Benefit League was founded about thirty years ago, consisting of a group of public spirited women who realized the great need for concerted work in behalf of child-caring institutions of Chicago. These women put forth their efforts toward collecting funds for these little ones. To this end a Tag Day was planned. This is a day whereon thousands of women give of their leisure time, selling tags on the streets of Chicago and its suburbs, thus helping to provide food, shelter, and recreation for a vast number of underprivileged children. There is a vast amount of business and distribution of territory before these women can go out on the streets of the big city to tag. Very strict rules and regulations have been formulated.

Therefore, it was a day of great rejoicing when the members of the League were allowed to share these privileges. The territory allotted to them was not of the best, but they were undaunted. Some will never forget the thrill of that first tag day. Even the Mayors of neighboring suburbs had been called for permission to "tag."

A delicious dinner for the taggers, followed by

inspirational addresses (again under the leadership of Miss Marie Hansen), had been served the evening before in the Wicker Park Church.

Many an alarm clock sounded so early in the dawn that it was still dark. One devoted "Captain" supplied coffee and sandwiches to her workers in the grey light of the morning under the elevated tracks. The day was bright and clear, and on the whole the taggers met kindness and courtesy on the city streets. Mrs. A. F. Olgen, a founder of the League, with failing eyesight, tagged for many, many years on the same corner until she was called hence just a short year ago. Her box contained more than one ten dollar bill. Some of the taggers were photographed and their pictures appeared in the daily papers. When tired, almost to the point of exhaustion, they, one by one, turned in their boxes at the Hotel Sherman, where space had been granted through the kindness of Mr. G. E. Thon, who befriended the Home in many ways. The boxes were found to contain the amazing sum of $2,094.77. From that day to this Tag Day has been the biggest source of ready cash for the Home.

Meanwhile the women had not forgotten their plans for building. They planned for a boys' dormitory and decided to put on "a drive." While they planned they prayed, and "all the time they worked."

They worked, as has been said, on street corners on Tag Day, in the Home auditing accounts, sewing and mending, in rummage sales on all sides of the city, in bazaars, teas, luncheons, concerts, and other activities too numerous to mention. At one time, later, they sponsored a picture in the Old Eighth Street Theatre for a week.

The women did not forget for one minute the need for more room. Sister Caroline reported more children waiting.

In her report for 1922 the President said: "Why we did not build. I might mention first of all the price of building material. We have cherished the hope that prices would come down. Then there is the unsettled labor condition. Last, but not least, reason for our hesitancy is that when we closed our campaign for the building fund we found we had not raised one-half the required amount."

But what of the character and body building of

the children received during those first years?

Everyone felt that the Home was filling a real need, though, by this time, not all of the children received were from the Juvenile Court.

There was little Jack who was taken in from the Augustana Nursery. He had been sent out for adoption several times and each time returned because he was threatened with total blindness. The Nursery then applied to the Receiving Home, and the lad was made a member of that happy family.

At times a Pastor would apply on behalf of some unfortunate child and wherever possible room was made for the little one.

One bitter cold day, in these early years, Sister Caroline brought to the Home three children, all from one family. They had practically no clothing but had to be wrapped in automobile blankets to be kept from freezing. Their feet had been badly frozen and their poor little undernourished bodies were bruised and scarred. When conditions in their home (too poor to be called a home) had improved somewhat the children were taken back to their parents. What a life of poverty, cruelty and suffering they must have lived can only be dimly imagined.

Six children lived in three rooms on a wind-swept prairie in a nearby suburb. One very cold day in winter, walking home from school, one of the little girls spoke to an officer along the way asking him in a pathetic, childish way if he could not take her to The Maywood Home. The officer, being very human, questioned the child, with the result that he took her to the Detention Home for children. Here, too, her little feet were found to be frozen and her body bruised and scarred. An officer was sent to bring back with him three of the children who were sent to different homes because there was no "room in the Inn," the Receiving Home being filled to overflowing. Sister Caroline has never encouraged "sob stories," but an incident such as the above made the women redouble their efforts and renew their determination to build a larger and better Home. Meanwhile, the children of school age were attending the Maywood Public Schools, where they easily kept pace with other children of the same age. They were always well dressed, interested, and alert, and their faces were bright and shining.

A heavy fence with iron posts was erected around the property.

The first legacy of five thousand dollars was received from the Isabella Newton Estate. It was invested immediately in bonds at six per cent.

The Year Book of The Lutheran Woman's League for 1924 contained the following:

"I would like to greet you in behalf of the children who have found a home in our Maywood Home. We have orphans, half-orphans, and some who have been deserted by their parents. Have we not reason to rejoice when we realize that the Master has permitted us to care for these—His very own? They may be forsaken by parents but they are very precious to our King, and I am sure they are also precious to the King's Daughters, the members of The Lutheran Woman's League. We thank Him for using us in His service and pray for grace to do more in the future.

"Forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal, unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."—*Phil 3:13-14.*

"Yours in the Master's Service,

"Caroline Williams"

CHAPTER 3

It was 1924, and a new President was in the chair of The Lutheran Woman's League, Mrs. E. J. Mosser, active, resourceful, and always interested in the work of the Home. It was five years since the first child had been admitted. No child had been refused entrance save for one or two very good reasons—lack of room or contagious illness among the children. Owing to unavoidable circumstances there had been several changes of personnel in the management at the Home. Up to this time four devoted Christian women had given the children a mother's love and care—Mrs. Shunck, Miss Anderson, Miss Rorem, Miss Esther Carlson. The first three had been compelled for personal reasons to give up the work.

But the Chairman of The Board of Managers was not changed and never gave up. She continued her plans for a new building. Here are her own reasons

EVENING DEVOTION

for urging the women to support the Children's Receiving Home at Maywood:

"Because it is a real home, not an institution."

"Because the children are kept off the streets, the fenced in grounds being ideal for a playground."

"Because the seed of Good-Will, kindliness and thoughtfulness, is being diligently nourished."

"Because it is for dependent children who might otherwise be sent to a state institution on account of lack of room in such homes as ours."

"Because the children entrusted to the care of The Children's Receiving Home, Maywood, are receiving a Christian upbringing; their daily life is one of right living."

"Because our children attend Sunday School and church service regularly."

"Because our children love the Home as you would never doubt when you look into their happy faces."

"Because the true family life is lived, and each child knows that he or she is a unit of this family group and the very best is expected of each one."

"Because when our children are ill they receive watchful care."

"Because at all times they are appropriately dressed; warm clothing for cold weather, simple washable clothes for summer."

The Daughter's Auxiliary, meanwhile, was keeping in close touch with the work and giving their moral support as well as their ever-ready cash donations.

By this time the Home had sheltered over a hundred children at various times. It had been endorsed by the Chamber of Commerce through the efforts of an ever helpful friend, Mr. J. P. Hovland.

As usual, many beautiful affairs were given for the Home. Outstanding was the concert given in Orchestra Hall on March 31 by the famous St. Olaf Lutheran Choir. There were no vacant seats on that occasion, and the Receiving Home netted a neat sum. One Chicago paper said—"We have exhausted terms of praise in behalf of this choir."

Also, at this time the Home was fortunate in enlisting the interest of the Oak Park Branch of The Needlework Guild of America. It would be impos-

sible to number the beautiful garments they have sent to the Home. This Guild is composed of women not necessarily members of The League, but women who have the desire for service.

On the fifth anniversary of the Home the Board of Managers planned to publish a Cook Book. All members were asked for unusual or rare recipes. It was decided to finance the printing of the book through advertisements, and, once again, Mrs. G. P. Lottich gave willingly of her time and energy as chairman. The book was very popular, had a big sale and profited the Home. Amidst all these activities the women had not lost sight of their goal. The President reported in 1924 the Koch legacy of one thousand dollars.

The Chairman of the Board of Managers once again sounded the call to build when she closed her yearly report with these words:

"Naturally, the big work before us this coming year is the building of the new dormitory. The longer we are in the work the more apparent is the tremendous need for room."

At the same time Sister Caroline reported "a young

mother, two lovely children, deserted by her husband, the two little ones taken into the Home, there to learn to know Him."

"Another little boy left from babyhood entirely alone, without relatives of any kind, but God, the Father of the Fatherless, saw him and planned that this little boy should be lovingly cared for at our Maywood Home."

But the women had been doing a great deal more than dreaming of a new building. It was in 1922 that the first building committee had been selected. Sister Ingeborg Sponland was asked by the Board to become an advisory member of the committee because of her wide experience and excellent judgment. At all times she proved herself a most valuable member. It was five years before the task of the building committee was completed. This may seem like a long time, but half of the period was spent in watchful waiting.

As has been stated before, it was no time to build on account of the uncertainty of building conditions. However, one important decision was made. Ivar Viehe-Naess & Co. was the choice of architect.

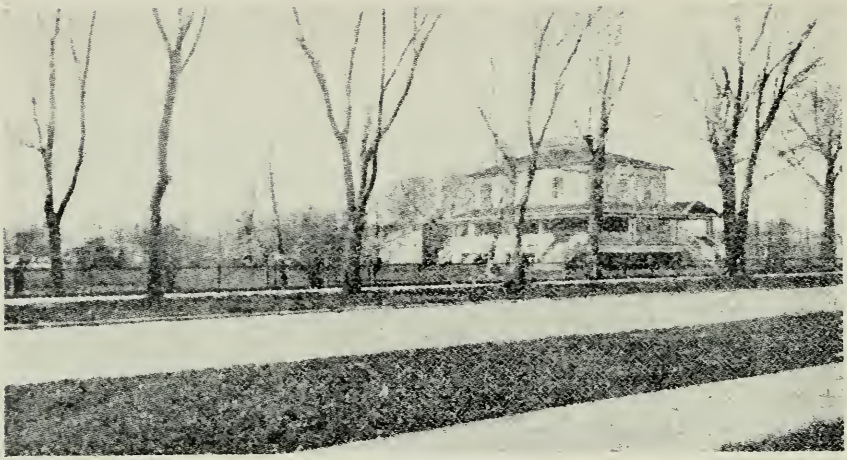
Tentative drawings were submitted and the vice-chairman, Alice Lanquist Forch, who served so faithfully during the strenuous building period, reported to the Lutheran Woman's League at the October meeting in St. Paul's Church, Evanston, that the minimum cost of the building required to meet the needs would be $70,000. (Mrs. J. P. Howland, first chairman of the building committe, had left the city.)

The League had then, as a result of the drive and legacies, between twenty and thirty thousand dollars. Were the women willing to assume a debt of over forty thousand dollars?

The motion was made and carried unanimously. It was a tense moment. The good President of the League, Mrs. E. J. Mosser, looked over the thrilled and awed faces of the women and saw one of the pastors standing in the rear of the church. She immediately called him to the front to offer prayer; a prayer of thankfulness for the unlimited faith of the members of the League and for Divine guidance for the future of their great undertaking. At the close of the prayer the women sang, with the true spirit of thanksgiving, "Praise God from Whom all blessings flow."

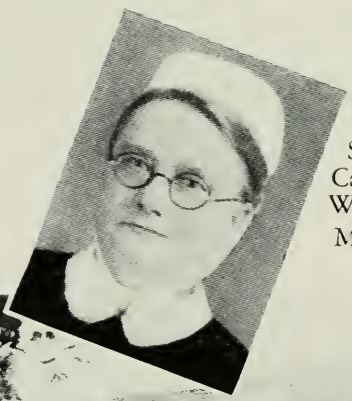
The very next day the Chicago daily papers announced a legacy of approximately fifty thousand dollars for The Home from the late Col. Tuttle. Needless to say, the wires were kept busy again as the joyful news was passed from one woman to another.

Said one beloved Vice-President, now loved and lost, to the President over the phone: "You can't see me, but tears of joy are streaming down my face for our beloved Home." "I don't quite understand you," said another to the Chairman of the Board of Managers. "I shouldn't think you would," she answered—"Fifty thousand dollars!"



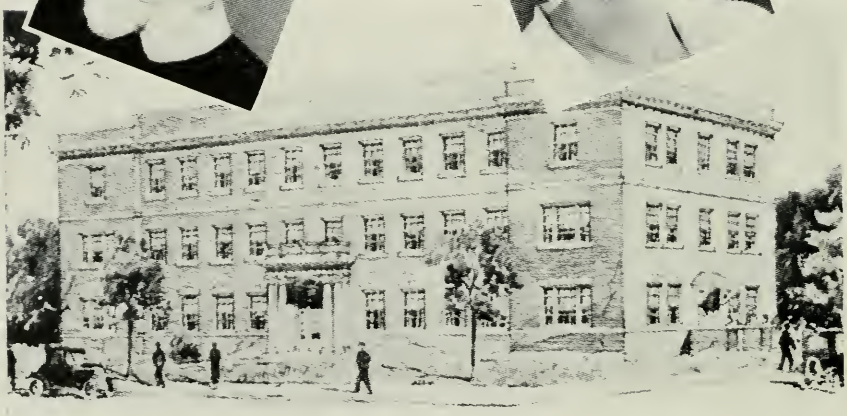
The Home in 1919

Sister Carolina is a representative in the
Juvenile Court
Miss Mina Lichtner, Superintendent



Sister
Carolina
Williams

Miss Mina
Lichtner



The Home in 1926

CHAPTER 4

THE YEAR 1925 WAS A BUSY YEAR for the more than active Building Committee, consisting of Mrs. J. P. Hovland, Mrs. M. L. Kropf, Mrs. E. J. Mosser, Sister Caroline Williams, and Mrs. John L. Forch, Jr., who so capably served as chairman. Eight meetings were held in consultation with the architects, and changes were made and improvements added from time to time.

At the April meeting of the organization Mr. Viehe-Naess was present and submitted his plans. By a motion, made by Sister Caroline, and unanimously carried, the Building Committee was authorized to proceed at once with its task. In August the plans and specifications were furnished and accepted by The Trustees.

On September 27 the corner stone was laid, with a beautiful service. Owing to the unavoidable absence of Mrs. E. J. Mosser, Mrs. A. P. Fors, whose

passing was so sincerely mourned, presided. The little ones from the Home raised their happy voices in a hymn of praise, and the choir of Christ Church furnished beautiful music. The staunch friend of the Home from its beginning, Dr. S. P. Long, delivered one of the addresses and Judge Victor Arnold the other. The Rev. C. E. Hoffsten laid the cornerstone with a beautifully worded service, which must have been original as no set form for such an occasion could be found.

Thus saith the Lord:
Behold, I lay for a foundation a stone,
A tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation.
Salvation will I appoint for walls and bulwarks
Justice will I make the line,
And righteousness the plummet.

Then I lifted up mine eyes and looked
And, behold a man with a measuring line in his hand
Then said I, Whither goest thou?
And he said unto me, To measure the house,
To see what is the breadth thereof
And what is the length thereof.

And it shall come to pass, that there shall come people

Even the inhabitants of many cities, saying
We also will go with you;
For we have heard that God is with you.
Wherefore be ye strong, all ye people, saith the Lord and work:
For I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts.

The house shall be builded,
And this place will I fill with my glory.
The silver is mine and the gold is mine:
Great shall be the glory of this house,
And in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.

Members of the Daughter's Auxiliary were on the grounds helping as ever. It was a beautiful scene, just as the sun was setting, and the members of the League could well feel—"The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad!"

October 3, 1926, was another red letter day for the Home and the League. Owing to unavoidable circumstances a new Superintendent, Mrs. Myrtle Hadley, had been secured and arrived just in time for the flitting from the old Home to the new. This was a very trying time to come as a stranger, but Mrs. Hadley did not remain a stranger long. The children felt at once that Mrs. Hadley held for them

the same motherly attitude that Miss Carlson had always shown. The children were well organized, and the moving was accomplished with little confusion before the day of dedication. Although the day had been gloomy the sun shone in the afternoon, and it was possible to hold the exercises on the lawn. Dr. Long often told afterward how he had prayed for fair weather. The processional consisted of three vested choirs, the children of the Home, the new Superintendent, the Speakers and the Board of Trustees.

On this occasion Dr. D. A. Davy performed the act of dedication. Dr. E. F. Krauss, of the Seminary at Maywood, and Judge Mary Bartelme, of the Juvenile Court, were the speakers.

The new building cost approximately $100,000.00 and was built to accommodate sixty children. There are study rooms, playrooms, reception rooms, dining rooms, both general and private, a kindergarten room, shop room for the boys, sewing room for the girls, and private rooms for the Superintendent and helpers. It is a first class structure in every way, fireproof throughout, and built to serve future gen-

THE RECEPTION ROOM

erations. The architects and Committee did not lose sight for a minute of the original idea that it was to be a real Home in every sense of the word.

There are also storerooms for food, vegetables and fruit, a complete kitchen and pantry with ample cupboard space and linen closets. There is electric refrigeration and a completely equipped laundry. Good plumbing is used throughout and oak trim where wood is necessary. Also it boasts a very practical heating plant. All floors and partitions are either tile or concrete. In fact, it is a building of which the Lutheran Woman's League may be justly proud and also the vicinity in which it is located. It is attractive in appearance, and the Chicago Dailies gave it much publicity. It is but a short distance from church, school, high school and playground.

Mrs. Forch closed her report for 1927 with the following appropriate words:

> *"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give the glory for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake."*

Of course, the next question was how to furnish a Home, so much larger, so many more rooms and so

much more space. The 1927-1928 Year Book contains a list of the rooms furnished by various interested friends and societies. Space would not permit listing them here, but it is interesting to note that in its report for that year the Daughter's Auxiliary stated that they had completed their pledge for the Kindergarten of the Home, also that the Infant Ward of The Home was to be furnished by those good friends of the children, Mr. and Mrs. William Meyer.

The first Christmas in the new Home was a beautiful affair. The building was aglow with the Yuletide colors. The friends who gathered were laden with gifts, and the children themselves gave the Christmas service in the beautiful hallway of the building. They also sang some of the old, but ever new, Christmas carols.

It is worthy of record to know that at the first meeting of the Board of Managers in the new dormitory the usual form of opening was eliminated and each member of the Board, also the new Superintendent, gave a prayer of gratitude to the Heavenly Father who watches over the children of the Home. However, the Board of Managers opened every meet-

THE HALLWAY

ing held with a prayer for guidance and thankfulness for mercies received.

And now, that the great objective of the Lutheran Woman's League had been met, there were new responsibilities and new demands. Mrs. Hadley in her first report listed fifty children with a storeroom to be replenished. The children were also to be clothed, kept strong and healthy and given spiritual training, so as to become useful members of society.

Could the women rise to the occasion and keep up the same high standards for the Home? They could and they did.

That year the President reported, with much gratitude, two other legacies of $500.00, the bequest of Mrs. Mary Meier of St. Luke's church, and $1,000.00 from the estate of Mrs. Jacob Helmes of Epiphany church. At this time also the dream of The Daughter's Auxiliary became a reality and a Kindergarten was in full force. It was indeed a happy sight to see the little ones, under school age, with beaming faces, so busily engaged in play and song. This department of the work was conducted by Miss Evelyn Gerberding, a trained kindergartener. Later, during

the years of depression, this branch had to be closed for financial reasons, but it is to be sincerely hoped that some time it can be continued. The salary was paid by the Daughter's Auxiliary and the Educational Fund of Wicker Park church.

The Cook Book Fund by this time took care of the furniture for the children's dining room on the third floor; the dishes and silver in the main dining room and a washing machine.

By this time there was a very active Bundle Day Committee. The women from the various churches were invited to choose their own day, spend it at the Home and bring their bundles with them. By this plan the pantry shelves were never quite empty nor the storeroom lacking in supplies.

The Clothing Committee also continued to be very active under the leadership of Mrs. Elmer F. Krauss, who was instrumental in having groups of women come to the Home by the day to sew and mend. Mrs. Krauss made her yearly reports so interesting, so full of humor and the "personal touch" that more than one member of the organization said they attended the quarterly meeting only to hear her re-

ports. This work is being successfully carried on by Mrs. William Eckert.

Once again the Needlework Guild of America sent a box at Christmas time of one hundred and ten absolutely new garments.

The old building was put in order with new paint and new porches to be used as isolation quarters and rooms for the helpers. The old basement was also equipped as a play room.

Tag Day continued to be the biggest source of cash income. In Mrs. Hadley's first report she said: "The work of the Children's Receiving Home is one of cultivation, that the children entrusted to our care may be more attractive in body and spirit. We give them simple but nourishing food, plenty of sleep and exercise, and train them to love and reverence holy things and attend to the little courtesies of life."

CHAPTER 5

In 1928 Mrs. F. T. Westberg stepped into the chair of The Lutheran Woman's League and proved herself entirely capable of fulfilling her trust.

This was the first and only year that Mrs. M. L. Kropf did not serve as Chairman of the Board of Managers, Mrs. E. J. Mosser proved herself very efficient and active in that position for that year.

These were years of steady growth and development. The children themselves proved this fact. After all, they are so much more important than organization, finance or buildings of wood and stone. It is time to become more intimate with the children themselves, who at this time numbered fifty-seven.

There was Mary—just Mary—in the Home, who had been there for years, attending both grade and high school as a student of highest honor. She left the Home at this time to take up nurses' training, again becoming a student of highest standing.

There was Lillian who had practically been raised in the Home, always ready to help, and always smiling. She became a member of the staff and after a time was married. There was a real wedding in the Home, just like a wedding in any home, with showers and gifts and bridesmaids.

Florence, who also came when the Home was first opened, became the assistant to the nurse.

Little three year old Hans ran upstairs to the Nursery one day, very dirty and all puffed up with importance, for he had a penny in his pocket. He said: "Now I am a big man. I have dirty overalls and money in my pocket."

In 1929, Mrs. Westberg still President of the organization, and the same Chairman of The Board of Managers, it was reported that during the year over one hundred children sorely in need of a home were turned away.

It was with deep regret that Mrs. Hadley's resignation, on account of ill health, was accepted. Her influence had been of the best. Many will never forget her constant kindness.

It was most fortunate that just at this time the

Home secured Miss Mina Lichtner as Superintendent. To step into a work which calls for constant supervision over more than fifty children is no small task. Miss Lichtner, however, proved herself equal to the task in every way. She has remained at the Home from that time until the present. Too much cannot be said of her unfailing tact and sympathy, her gift for organization and her good influence over the children's lives.

It was this year also that the League celebrated the tenth anniversary of the founding of The Children's Receiving Home.

Looking back over the first decade the women found that it had indeed been "well worth while." Group divisions had been entirely forgotten, while for ten years the women had worked and prayed together for a common cause.

> *"If we work upon immortal souls, If we imbue them with right principles, With the just fear of God, and love for their fellow-men, We engrave upon those tablets, something which will brighten all Eternity."*

In 1930 Mrs. E. H. Ahrbecker took over the leadership of the organization and proved herself in every-

way "a born leader," and a staunch friend of the Home. She had been interested and served it in many ways from its beginning. The Board of Managers held the same tireless Chairman.

In 1930 Mrs. Ahrbecker announced the following bequests—$1,000.00 from the estate of John Siegfried, $75.00 from the estate of Mrs. Tillie Davy, and a bequest of $5,000.00 from the estate of Dr. E. E. Henderson.

Among the notable events of the year were the concerts given under the auspices of the League by the Midland College a Capella choir and the Northwest Male Chorus.

By this time the Board of Managers had established the precedent of Anniversary Luncheons. One notable feature of that year's luncheon was the shower of Life and Associate memberships presided over so beautifully by Mrs. Fred Matson. Many have a vivid recollection of her on that day, lighting a candle as each life membership was presented. She has gone, but her light still shines brightly. Mrs. L. E. Hanson afterwards filled the same chairmanship, as well as serving the Home in countless other

ways, but she, too, has been called by the Master whom she loved to serve through His little children.

That year the report of the Chairman of The Board of Managers devoted most of its space to the children themselves, for truly

> *"They are angels of God in disguise,*
> *His sunshine still sleeps in their tresses,*
> *His glory still gleams in their eyes."*

She reported that as many as were of school age attended the Maywood Public schools. Miss Lichtner once told of how, with many misgivings, she had set out to visit the children's school, as every real mother does sometimes. She returned to the Home having heard not one unfavorable report—and each teacher spoke of the children's polite behavior, and of how their whole conduct reflected the atmosphere of the Home.

The Principal of the Emerson School was once asked to comment on the children. He said, in part: "I am happy to say the children have given us less trouble than some who came from a home with parents to care for them, and I feel that this is largely due to the wonderful atmosphere in which they are surrounded outside of school."

THE CHILDREN'S BEDROOM

Outside of school they were given a well balanced day of play and work. The boys washed walls, cut grass, beat carpets and helped lay a driveway.

The girls were taught to take pride in helping to keep their rooms, closets, lockers and dresser drawers in good condition. Moreover, they were taught to use a needle, making spreads for the younger children's beds, and even some of their own simple clothing.

During that fall and winter there was a very serious epidemic among the children. At one time thirteen children were in bed and the Home was in strict quarantine.

One of the younger boys fell asleep, never to awaken again in this world. He was laid to rest in Arlington Cemetery.

Miss Lichtner certainly arose to the occasion and with the aid of the other helpers "carried on" most willingly and efficiently. No extra help was needed. To prevent such an epidemic from spreading among the fifty-four children, who were there that year, was indeed a work of skill.

One more outstanding event of that year was the

first appearance of "The Children's Home Herald," a four page paper issued quarterly.

This venture was sponsored by the Board of Trustees, with Mrs. G. P. Lottich as Editor-in-Chief. It soon proved to be a real news sheet and brought untold numbers in closer touch with the Home.

Too much cannot be said for it as a source of information and inspiration. Mrs. Lottich proved herself a brilliant and talented Editor and served as such for eight years.

The work was then taken over by Mrs. I. M. Peterson, one of the busiest workers for the Home, but always willing to attempt one more thing for the work in which she has been so interested for many years.

If, in these brief pages, names or gifts have not been mentioned which should have been, some way or other, space was always found in The Children's Home Herald. It seems that nothing escapes the watchful eye of "Ye Editor."

Interested friends and members of the League have been brought into very close touch with the children through this little sheet. For example, the

very first issue told that eight of the larger boys joined the Boy Scouts, that from August to November of that year seventy-five children had to be refused for lack of room, that an electric piano had been donated by a friend and that the boys sewed on their own buttons willingly to the merry tunes of the piano, that four of the children were confirmed that year by Rev. M. E. Boulton in St. John's Evangelical Church, Maywood, Ill. Where else could such intimate glimpses of the children be given? It has not always been easy. There are postal laws to be complied with; mailing and addressing so many copies is a task in itself. Moreover, the children help in this work even to this day. The announcements and reports are often a day or two late, but the little Herald never fails to arrive on time.

1930 was the first year that the Board of Managers sent out a Christmas letter of appeal for checks. The results were gratifying. One interested friend wrote in sending her gift:

"I consider this a privilege, as I am sure the children are worthy of every good gift. I regret that at this time I am limited to send this amount, as I

would be glad to send more if it only were possible. Thank you for remembering me. Indeed, I feel the pleasure is all mine in helping in this small way."

Sincerely,

. . . . . .

Christmas that year was especially worthy of note, for some of the children who had been dismissed returned Home! In fact, two of the boys who had been transferred to a boys' school wrote and asked permission to spend Christmas in the only real home they knew. They were there in their uniforms, with beaming faces. Mary, who was in training to be a nurse, was also there, and Lillian with a husband and a darling baby boy. It was a most happy reunion.

In 1931 the Home operated under great financial difficulties, for this was the beginning of the grim years of "the depression." However, the President was able to report $234.00 from the Almas Cochran Estate, and a gift of $5,000.00 toward the Endowment Fund given by Miss Marie Hanson in loving memory of her father and mother.

The Finance Committee also sold stamps that year

netting the Treasury $1,500.00. The helpers at the Home willingly took a ten per cent cut in salary during the year, and at Christmas time no gifts were given to the helpers.

Every effort, however, was made to not have the children feel the effect of the changed situation.

At this time also more than twenty cases of illness developed among the children, but, once again, owing to Miss Lichtner's untiring energy and the cooperation of the whole staff no extra help was needed. Fifty-seven children were cared for that year.

This was also a notable year because Mary completed her nurse's training at the Melrose Park Hospital and passed her state board examinations. In writing of her life at the Home, Mary said, "As I think of the days I spent at the Home my heart fills with gratitude, gratitude first to God, and then to the dear friends who have made such a Home possible for me and many others. My life has been richly blessed, not only with earthly gifts but with things I count far greater. It was at the Home I found the greatness of God's love, also the true value of real friends, friends who will inspire me

to the better things in life. All that I ever hope to be will be but a reflection of the friends the Home has given me. Though I have been away for several years my heart is always there. It is my Home, memories still call me back. I shall always be proud of it!"

THE CHILDREN'S SITTING ROOM

CHAPTER 6

In 1932 Mrs. E. J. Mosser was again elected President of the organization and Mrs. M. L. Kropf, Chairman of The Board of Managers.

This was a hard year at the Home, and the officers and staff felt their responsibilities keenly. In her annual report the President said: "Through the faithful support of the members and friends it has been possible to continue through perhaps the most critical and serious times that have ever confronted the Home." In her message in The Children's Home Herald, she said: "I regret that my first message to you, as your new President, has to be of such a serious character."

The Chairman of The Board of Managers devoted her entire article to the subject of daily supplies, asking all to realize how much the Home needed in provisions in that grim year of the depression.

Nevertheless there were many bright spots. The

justly famous Apollo Musical Club gave a benefit concert for the Home that year, as did the choirs of several churches—Christ, Redeemer, North Austin.

Also the interest from the Cochran Estate was again paid into the Treasury through the efforts of Mr. Koch of St. Luke's Church. The Stamp Committee also added to the income and the Daughter's Auxiliary continued their efforts.

That year the Elsie E. Arbuckle Clothing Fund was established by the husband of Elsie E. Arbuckle, a former Board Member who had passed to her reward the year previous.

The children, however, continued to grow and develop despite the critical times. William graduated from the Proviso High School that June, his name having been placed on the "honor roll." In the fall he entered North Park Junior College with the ministry in view. Two others graduated from eighth grade and entered High School in September.

May Day was observed by the Kindergarten tots. They silently tiptoed through the hall, hanging May baskets on the door knobs of the helpers.

One little boy spent the week-end with his mother.

She served him canned creamed corn, whereupon the little one said: "I don't like corn this way, I like it on the bone—the way we had it at the Home."

The officers were further encouraged by receiving a monthly donation from the Emergency Relief Fund.

At the close of the year the Chairman of the Board of Managers thus challenged the members of the League: "Can we look forward to an easy year? Hardly—can we go backward, or can we even stand still? Never before has it been so necessary to move on and on and on. "Please, good friends, face the call of these children along with all earnest and thoughtful men and women who know that the hope for the future lies in the youth of to-day." Most sincerely, Martha Louise Kropf.

In 1933 Mrs. J. A. Leas was elected to serve as President of the organization. She served wisely and well, having always the interest of the Home and the children at heart. In her first message she said: "The beauties of spring are unfolding but none compare with the beauties of a child's face. It is with much concern that we face the question—can we keep going?"

In October of that year through the news sheet she wrote: "The pantry shelves are empty and clothes are sorely needed."

At the same time the ever faithful Chairman of The Board of Managers urged all members and friends to read the 21st chapter of St. John and apply the words "Feed my lambs" to the children in the Receiving Home. She reported this to be the most anxious time of the Home's existence. The supply room was practically empty, but she added—"My faith tells me the shelves will be filled."

Every effort was made at the Home to reduce expenses. The Nursery and the Kindergarten were closed, as was also the old building. The number of workers was reduced, and the remaining ones did extra work cheerfully, even though for many months wages were unpaid.

Tag Day once again helped out in this critical time, as did the quota received from the Community Fund. One Brotherhood responded to the appeal made to fill the empty shelves with cereals, and another Brotherhood started a milk fund, and several devoted Ladies' Aids canned all day long to fill the empty

jars. Once again the interest from the Cochrane Estate helped, and putting all together the crisis was passed.

On June 19 of that year The Lutheran Woman's League celebrated its fortieth anniversary with a luncheon given at the Palmer House, to which all out of town Lutherans to the Century of Progress were invited. The first speaker, Mrs. Emmy Evald, who had so much to do with the organization of the League, gave a stirring history of the same. It was also an event to have Miss Jane Addams, of Hull House fame, deliver an address.

After the program and luncheon a Tea was served for the out of town guests at the Home. Cars were provided for transportation and much interest was aroused for the Home and the children.

On December 1 of that year, at the suggestion of Sister Caroline, League members and friends met at the Home for a period of prayer and praise. All felt the nearness of God when appeal after appeal was made for the children, and all left feeling that they would indeed be cared for. It was reported that this was the outstanding event of the year. So great was

the impression it left that it was decided to have an hour of prayer and praise at the annual meeting of the organization.

Meantime, every effort had been made to have the children live normally, just as in other years.

Five of the boys were confirmed that year by Rev. M. E. Boulton, who has always been interested in the lives of the children and an influence for good.

And Christmas was the same gala event it had always been. One of the boys wrote about it in The Children's Home Herald. He said: "At noon on December 13 we each received our dollar which had been so kindly provided for us by friends. These dollars were our only means of buying gifts for each other.

"Mrs. Krauss, who represented these kind friends, handed us the dollars amid much excitement on our part. Mrs. Krauss was excited, too, for it is much fun for her to hand out these dollars year after year—our Christmas dollars.

"During the week before Christmas one could see both the little children and the older ones going to the store, especially the five and ten cent stores—try-

ing to make the dollars go as far as they possibly could.

"On Christmas Eve the spirit of Christmas filled the air. How we waited for the supper provided by the same good friends!

"All were happy over the gifts that were received, and there was a continual talking about these presents. (I don't want the helpers to know this, but it probably went on almost all night.)

"To all who made this Christmas one of the best we ever had, a hearty Thank you!"

It was reported that this strenuous and critical year had been a year of many blessings.

There had been prevailing good health among the fifty children, the school reports were all satisfactory, some above the average.

The Clothing Committee had been right on the job. The Bundle and Supply Committee had kept the children from going hungry, and the Daughter's Auxiliary had proved a staunch support as always.

The report closed with these words: "A great All-seeing, All-powerful Spirit, has been watching over the Maywood Family, I am sure."

It was 1934 and the League again elected Mrs. E. J. Mosser President. This was the first time in the history of the organization that a third term had been given to anyone. Therefore, the action showed unlimited respect and confidence in Mrs. Mosser and great interest on her part that she was willing to serve in such a critical time. The Board of Managers showed their unfailing trust and confidence in electing once again the same Chairman.

The tension lessened somewhat that year. A large part of the Augusta Stoelker estate was paid, and several special events were planned by a hard working Finance Committee to increase the income, one of the main ones being the collection of a "Mile of Pennies."

During the passing years many wonderful outings had been given the children, picnics, wiener roasts, parties, but perhaps the most important event to the children that year was the very hot day on which they were taken to visit "The Century of Progress."

That the work of the Home was still very necessary and very much appreciated is shown by the following letter:

"Dear Friends:

"Just a few lines to express my appreciation for your Home. It has been a great blessing to me, having sheltered my three boys, two of them for five and a half years and the oldest boy for three years. It gave me an opportunity to work during the week and visit them on Sunday. We have established a home together again but will always be grateful to the Home at Maywood." (Signed) "One of the Mothers."

It has always been the policy of the Home to return the children to their parents just as soon as circumstances would permit, but naturally it took longer in some cases than in others.

Once again in The Children's Home Herald several of the children wrote happily and enthusiastically of what Christmas at the Home that year had meant to them, and always there was heavy emphasis laid on their "Christmas dollars."

At the close of the year the President said:

"The co-operation given us in the Mile of Pennies and the Sale, held at our Home, has made it possible for us to report that, even though times are still serious, interest in our Home has increased and has

made it possible for us at the close of the year to feel that our financial condition is better than a year ago."

The ever faithful, self-sacrificing Superintendent reported that the most important bills had been met, including the back salaries, which, she said, made it seem as if a big black cloud which had been hovering over the Children's Receiving Home had passed over and the Home was again enjoying the sunshine of brighter days.

It was reported that, with over seven thousand children passing through the Juvenile Court every year, it was but a small share to provide for from fifty to sixty children.

It was also said that some of the parents of children in the Home did not trouble to visit their children once a year. "Where," the question was asked, "should the blame lie for the tragic crimes reported daily in the papers?" The report closed with a quotation from Ruskin:

> *"There is no wealth but life, and that nation is the richest that builds the greatest number of noble homes and beings."*

THE CHILDREN'S RECEPTION ROOM

CHAPTER 7

Mrs. John L. Forch, Jr., was next elected President of the organization and proved exactly the right leader for those strenuous years, 1935-1938. There was no change of Chairman of The Board of Managers. These were years of hard work and development at the Home. The children, too, developed in a healthy normal manner.

Sister Caroline reported two lovely boys brought to her attention. The mother was badly in need of hospitalization but had no place to leave the children. Once again the doors of the Home opened wide, and the little lads were given a happy home while the mother was cared for.

One of the older boys who had been placed elsewhere wrote and asked to come Home for Palm Sunday and Easter, saying that he always helped around the house, especially sweeping the halls, and added: "I will be thankful if you let me come."

Two of the boys were confirmed in St. John's church that year. Miss Lichtner told that one of the boys often took his calendar in hand, counting the days till he could wear his long trousers.

The Daughter's Auxiliary entertained the children that year by giving them an outing at the Brookfield Zoo. The Daughters said afterward that they were much impressed with the appearance and conduct of the children. They looked and acted like little ladies and gentlemen.

This was but one of the many outings given the children that year. About Christmas one boy wrote:

"Christmas is an experience in beauty if you would become acquainted with the candle light service of the children. Even now I find myself leafing the pages of Isaiah, picking out the Old Testament prophecies concerning the birth of Jesus and lighting again the candles with the boys at the table.

"Christmas is an experience in love. About a week before Christmas all of us would receive the dollars to spend as we pleased. Maybe you have never known what it is to get something for your roommate. Christmas does open your heart."

What a beautiful and unusual way for a boy to write, but, not to be outdone, one of the girls that very same year said:

"You, through your thoughtfulness, have given me a chance to call one place Home."

At the close of the year the President reported that the finances of the Home were gradually getting into better shape. The dense clouds seemed to be lifting and all concerned renewed their courage.

It became necessary that year to put a new roof on the building.

The balance of the Stoelker Legacy was paid in full, and another bequest in the Will of Mrs. Andrew Thelander was reported. Mrs. Thelander was one of the earliest members of the League.

That year the Treasurer, assisted by the Finance Committee, prepared a financial statement and sent it to the Chicago Council of Social Agencies, asking for assistance from the Community Fund.

It was reported that the support of each child in the Home for one year amounts to $252.00, because the pantry shelves are always filled by friends.

Just by way of contrast, at St. Charles, Illinois, a

State corrective farm for boys, the State is taxed $490.00 a year to keep a boy.

In 1936 the Superintendent reported that 1900 copies of the Children's Home Herald are sent out, but that the average attendance on the "big days" at the Home, Christmas, Founders' Day and the June meeting is about 300, so that about sixteen hundred friends miss out on these occasions. But these figures did not prevent the "big days" from being both interesting and inspiring in 1936, as in every other year.

The President was happy to report a sounder financial condition though some very expensive improvements has been found necessary, such as a new hot water boiler and water softener.

The bond issue also became due that year, and it became necessary to refinance. A very efficient Committee, headed by Mrs. E. Sallet, who had for so long had the interests of the Home at heart, saved the organization about $400.00 in cost, and much more in interest, as they were able to reduce the rate of interest from five per cent to four. Because of their kindness and consideration in dealing with the bondholders, a reputation for fairness was established.

A financial statement was once again sent to the Council of Social Agencies, hoping for recognition in 1937 because of the interest the Lutheran Committee showed in the matter.

The Chairman of The Board of Managers in her report for that year again thanked Dr. Peters, of Maywood, for his time and skill in helping to keep the children in good health. She also thanked the Deaconess Hospital, which so willingly and generously gave professional and institutional care whenever it was needed by the children, for you cannot compute the care of the sick in dollars and cents.

But when it came to thanking the Norwegian Lutheran Church for all that Sister Caroline had given in service, in human love and unerring judgment for eighteen years, words failed.

The Superintendent reported for 1936 forty-six children coming from twenty-nine families, one orphan and eight half-orphans. The mother of two little ones was in the Tuberculosis Hospital, and mothers of seven were in Insane Asylums. Twenty-eight of the children came from broken homes.

Surely a report such as this answered the question

which had been so often asked in the early years of the Home's existence:

"Is there a need for a Home such as this?"

In 1937 the same trustworthy officers and Superintendent were at the helm and asked the members and friends to face the coming year with joy.

Life went on normally at the Home. Two of the girls were confirmed on Palm Sunday, and as every other year, they were suitably clothed by kind friends.

The Home was a busy place during house-cleaning time. Just as in any normal home the children took part in the activities. The building is a big place to clean—so many rooms, closets, doors, windows. The bigger boys washed and cleaned the ceilings and the janitor did the calcimining.

A thousand-dollar gift was received that year from Miss Ida Thalen in memory of her brother. During the passing years it is only fair to say other gifts of a thousand dollars had been made, but as they went into the general fund received no special mention at the request of the donors.

The Annual Luncheon was outstanding because Mrs. Walrath, founder of the Evanston Cradle, was the speaker. There are thousands of homes through-

out the land happier because of the babies placed in them by the Cradle.

That year nearly all of the children had the opportunity to go on a vacation. Those who stayed at home were given outings at Grant Park, the Navy Pier and other parks.

Right here would be a good place to mention in passing, that Miss Stumo, the Girls' Matron, has for nine years taken from six to ten children to the same place each summer for the entire vacation.

Just before Christmas that year a little new girl and her two brothers were admitted to the Home. The younger children gathered about her and asked her many questions in eager childish ways. The little one told them a sad story of her mother who went out one day to hunt for work. While she was gone some men came and carried all the furniture out into the street. The children were put out, too, and the door was locked. "Oh," said the little one sadly, "My mother cried so hard when she came home and found us children and all our furniture out in the street."

The other children were much impressed and to brighten her sadness commenced to tell her all the wonders of a Christmas at the Children's Receiving

Home, mentioning the famous "dollars," the presents, the bountiful dinner and the lighting of the Christmas candles evening after evening, until on Christmas Eve twenty-four candles, representing twenty-four prophecies, are burning. "I remember my verse yet," said one, "Who is the King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts—He is the King of Glory."

The face of the new child brightened. "I am glad we are here," she said, "for we have no other home."

Is there a need for the Children's Receiving Home?"

Christmas at the Home that year saw the largest audience which has ever been present gathered to listen to the children's program.

Many improvements had been made in the property at that time. A new oil burner was established, many of the rooms painted at a minimum cost as the janitor did the painting. The children's playground was improved. It was encouraging that the state of the Treasury seemed to warrant these improvements.

A financial statement was once more prepared and sent to the Council of Social Agencies, and the good news was received that an allocation had been made to the Home from the Community Fund.

The Treasurer of the League, Mrs. Sallet, the Chairman of the Finance Committee, Mrs. Valbracht, the Lutheran Committee and Mr. J. P. Hovland are due much credit for their untiring efforts in this undertaking.

In her annual report for that year, the Chairman of The Board of Managers devoted some space to explaining the function of the Board, which meets at least ten times a year, and, sometimes oftener.

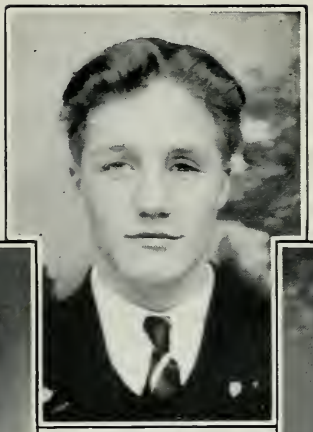
(The Board meets at eleven A. M. and is in session often till four P. M.) After finishing with old business, plus reports from the President and Treasurer of the organization, Miss Lichtner brings to the Board complete information as regards the happenings at the Home. This includes the staff, reports as to the amount of supplies from interested friends, linens, blankets, etc., but the larger part of the time is taken over in concentrating on questions and problems pertaining to the care of the children.

If one were good at figures the number of hours in twenty years these devoted women have spent for the good of the Home could be computed, but the energy consumed, the love, the devotion, could never be estimated in numbers.

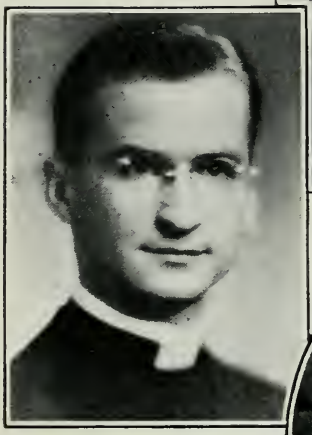
CHAPTER 8

In 1938 Mrs. E. F. Valbracht was elected President of the League and the same Chairman of the Board of Managers re-elected. They served wisely and well through what proved to be one of the most prosperous and pleasant years at the Home. In fact, Mrs. Valbracht said that she was convinced, coming in such close touch with the Home as her office required, that conditions there were as nearly ideal as they could possibly be in this type of work. This ideal condition could have only been attained, she said, under such leadership as that of the Superintendent and the Chairman of the Board of Managers.

Life at the Home that year was both pleasant and normal. The usual 1095 meals were served, and it is a pretty sight to see the children gathered at the table in their beautifully decorated dining room, where each window boasts a flower box made by the children.



Jack Brumeister



William Kmet

Thomas Fleming

Benno Ott

Louis Kmet

John Fuszek

J. B. West

SOME OF

Mary Harbushka

Georgiana Sherbojia

Olga Kmet

Helen Ott

Elaine Nielsen

Ella Kmet

Mildred Fuszek

OUR ALUMNI

There is no noise, no confusion, and each little head is bowed for Grace reverently before and after each meal.

Four girls were confirmed that year. They were in a class of twenty-two who went to the altar of St. John's Church, Maywood, Illinois. Two of the boys graduated from High School and four from Grade School.

It was in May of that year that the children themselves formed what they called an Alumni Association, composed of children from the Home who are now earning their own living. Thirty-three answered the first call and planned to have such a reunion annually. Many telegrams and letters were received from those who could not be present. It speaks volumes for the far reaching influence of the Home that the children who had left its shelter would form such an organization.

There were the two graduate nurses, the Orderly in a Hospital, the boy who now supports his mother, the one in the Navy, the four married girls, the one working in Field's, one in Carson's, one in an office, one in the Maywood Public Service Company, and

last, but not least, the boy who gave himself to the Gospel Ministry.

The first meeting of the Children's Receiving Home Alumni was held on May 8, 1938. William Kmet presided. It was opened with devotions, followed by a piano and violin duet. "Reminiscent speeches" were then made by several of the Alumni. Each told a little about his life and experience since leaving the Home. Then roll call and election of officers.

Motion was made and carried that this be an annual affair and that it be formed into an organization.

The "big days" at the Home that year were just as important and showed increasing interest.

The one outstanding event was the reopening on December 6 of the old Home. This was a happy day. Mrs. Sallet, whose mother was one of the first workers for the Home, and her committee deserve great credit for their work of rehabilitating the old building. All the work of cleaning and decorating was done by the janitor, assisted by an older boy.

The house warming was well attended, and a program of reminiscences was given. Some of the old home-like atmosphere was recaptured.

After this more serious part of the program three of the boys gave a Punch and Judy show which showed great originality on the part of the boys. One of the boys also gave a violin solo. The children of the Home certainly manifest much talent.

The re-opening of the old building provided rooms for three of the helpers, also living rooms for the care-taker and family, and a beautiful large light sewing room to be presided over by Mrs. Eckert, Chairman of the Clothing Committee.

Here the groups from various churches will spend many busy days, sewing, mending, caring for a growing family. Thirteen new children were received in 1938; the additional number was taken care of because of the opening of the old building. Sister Caroline immediately seized the opportunity to bring out two Filipino girls whose mother had deserted them. Despite their racial difference, they were received with open arms by the other children—some of the older girls delighting in combing their soft, long tresses. In closing her year's report Miss Lichtner said: "We need your prayers, we need your help, we need your talents and we need your friendship to succeed in our work."

The home sheltered sixty-three children in 1938. On May 3, 1939, William Kmet graduated from the Theological Seminary and was ordained at Carthage, Illinois. Miss Lichtner attended the ordination service. He is now serving in Davenport, Iowa.

Elaine graduated from High School in June. It had been her one wish for years to further her education in beauty culture. Through the unfailing kindness of Mrs. William Meyer, that faithful friend of the children, her wish will be granted and she will continue her education along that line.

CHAPTER 9

THE SAME LEADERS, President and Chairman of the Board of Managers, were elected to serve in 1939, Miss Lichtner remaining as Superintendent of the Home.

They are still serving as this short history of the Children's Receiving Home is being written, serving as always, wisely, actively and unselfishly.

On January 4, 1939, a qualified Case Worker was added to the staff of workers.

On Palm Sunday four boys and one girl were confirmed. They were neatly and appropriately dressed. They looked happy and confident as they answered the questions put to them by Rev. Boulton. Miss Lichtner herself had devoted so much time to this phase of their Christian training that on the Saturday Eve before Palm Sunday one of the children said to her: "Don't you think we might have one more session with you before we are confirmed?"

Olga graduated from the Augustana Hospital in the spring and passed her State Board Examinations with the highest possible grades.

On May 7, 1939, the second annual meeting of the Children's Receiving Home Alumni was held, William Kmet again presiding. Once again the meeting opened with devotionals, and greetings were read from those not present.

One lad very touchingly wrote that though he could not be present he could send a dollar "to buy something for the little children," and added: "I wish I could send more, perhaps later. I often recall the time when I was just a small boy and now I am six feet one and weigh one hundred and seventy-five pounds.

"Now that I am older I begin to appreciate what the Home did for me and how bad we kids were at times. I want to thank you for giving me a real Home and teaching me to be courteous and kind. I imagine all the children feel the same way."

Straight from a boy's heart that was a real tribute.

After a necessary amount of business at this second meeting Mrs. Kropf gave a very profitable talk on

her trip to Spitzbergen—Land of the Midnight Sun.

Encouraged perhaps by the example of the Alumni the children themselves have organized two other societies, Comrades of Christ and The Home Guards.

Realizing that it is only normal and natural for children at a certain age to band together, Miss Lichtner encourages their organizations. They help to satisfy the "gang instinct." She gives them her personal attention and attends the meetings, securing speakers and allowing them occasional refreshments. In the by-laws, formulated by the Home Guards themselves, the following occurs—"If a person has to be asked to leave the meeting three times in succession for disobedience, he is automatically put out of our Club."

For twenty years the June meeting of the organization has been held on the beautiful grounds of the Home. Groups of women from the various churches take turns in serving a hot luncheon and afternoon refreshments. The children themselves furnish the program, which grows more and more delightful with each passing year. This year the climax was reached when, under the direction of Miss Lichtner,

the children so perfectly rendered the Flower Operetta.

At the present writing the majority of the children are away for the summer. Some of the children who were away on vacations, some with their own relatives, have at this writing become so home-sick for the Children's Receiving Home, neither eating nor sleeping, that they have returned to its shelter.

Arrangements will be made to give the remaining children some form of an outing. Playground and garden equipment for the pleasure of the children has been purchased this year by a Memorial Fund, started by a gift from a member of the League, in honor of two beloved workers who but recently finished their earthly task, Mrs. E. F. Krauss and Mrs. L. E. Hanson.

Once again some of the workers fondly hoped that the old barn could be remodeled into a playroom for the growing boys, with cages around its sides for real live pets. Every normal growing boy needs a pet.

Tag Day and the Sale are being planned for just as enthusiastically and Christmas will once more for the twentieth time be the high peak of the year.

PICTURES TAKEN AT THE HOME DURING 1939

The Daughter's Auxiliary report a special fund started for the purchase of a bond to help reduce the indebtedness of the corporation. They are "standing by" loyally and faithfully. When there are breaks in the ranks of The Lutheran Woman's League there are young, trained workers ready to fill the vacant places.

On September 17, 1939, the forty-fifth anniversary of the organization of The Lutheran Woman's League, and the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Home was celebrated.

October 20, 1939, marks the twentieth anniversary Luncheon, stressing the story of the first twenty years. It is only natural then, that friends and supporters have a right to ask "Has it paid?"

During the twenty years the Home has sheltered three hundred and fifty-two children. An effort has been made in this little volume to show how strongly the Home and its peaceful, home-like atmosphere has influenced their lives. Peace has been taught and practiced in the Home. No warlike toys, no war games are ever permitted. In a troubled warlike world this is something to be thankful for. More-

over, the spiritual life is never neglected, not even when healthy sturdy little bodies are emphasized.

To give a son to the ministry is an honor to any Home. That the Receiving Home has a son now actively serving Christ and man is a glory and a pride.

There is an old, old poem, which says "Till the wise years decide," and the wise years have decided.

If in the past there have been some who misjudged and misunderstood the work it would be only fair to explain. The Children's Receiving Home at Maywood was not started to oppose or detract from any other home or work.

It was founded and established that the women of The Lutheran Woman's League of Chicago and Vicinity might have a definite, specific object for which to work *together*. Together, that is the word. During the twenty years at least seventy churches, representing seven groups as well as some outside organizations, have worked hand in hand, breaking down all group divisions. Could it not be regarded as a prophecy and a fulfillment. An attempt to fulfill the Master's prayer? "That Ye all may be One."

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